



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**FOSTERING FOREIGN RELATIONSHIPS  
AMONG DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PERSONNEL**

by

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March 2009

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**FOSTERING FOREIGN RELATIONSHIPS  
AMONG DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PERSONNEL**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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## **ABSTRACT**

In various regions around the world, the United States suffers from a significant deficit in operational awareness. In areas like the Middle East, reliable information regarding local attitudes and concerns towards U.S. policy are often unknown or overlooked. U.S. actions and policies can sometimes unintentionally incite anger and resentment among segments of the world community. Additionally, the DoD has scarce few individuals who understand the cultural complexities of a given region and know key persons within. These shortfalls in operational awareness can provide an inadequate understanding of why tensions exist or how to address them properly. As a result, the U.S. is at times surprised by unfavorable events when it should be prepared and have adequate forewarning. To summarize, the U.S. has significant blindspots regarding operational awareness and an insufficient number of persons networked into these obscure regions.

This thesis examines the potential of the Department of Defense (DoD) to increase operational awareness by fostering foreign relationships between DoD personnel and their foreign counterparts. This thesis further analyzes the value of encouraging U.S. military officers and NCOs to establish, maintain, and further develop personal and professional relationships with foreign military and defense civilians throughout their careers. Based upon an examination of the advantages foreign relationships can bring to secure U.S. policy objectives, courses of action and programs will be recommended to maximize the benefits from fostering foreign relationships within the DoD.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

We cannot enter into alliances until we are acquainted with the designs of our neighbors.<sup>1</sup>

### A. BACKGROUND: A DEFICIT OF OPERATIONAL AWARENESS

While the United States may be considered the most powerful nation on Earth, it remains a nation dangerously unaware, naive, and sometimes ambivalent regarding the intentions of allies and adversaries throughout the world. In multiple regions, there exists a significant deficit in both operational awareness and cultural intelligence, the effects of which are currently endangering the nation's security interests and international standing.<sup>2</sup> Frequently, the U.S. appears culturally disconnected from various populations and this unintentional detachment is often misinterpreted by some in the international community as an uncaring and disrespectful attitude. Additionally, U.S. actions and policies regularly incite anger and resentment among certain segments of the world population. Without an enhanced connection between the U.S. and the international community, operational awareness and cultural intelligence will continue to be deficient, creating significant vulnerabilities in key regions. The continued development of the nation's "enduring alliances" as mentioned in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review will be decisive in countering the current shortcomings in operational awareness and cultural intelligence.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, the United States must strive to create an atmosphere that promotes improved understanding of foreign allies and adversaries alike.

The Department of Defense (DoD) is positioned to play a critical role in developing an understanding of allies and adversaries since U.S. military forces are stationed around the globe and often operate in remote areas when working with foreign

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<sup>1</sup> Sun Tzu and Lionel Giles Xgiles, *The Art of War* (Wilder Publications, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Insert definitions of Operational Awareness and Cultural Intelligence.

<sup>3</sup> *Quadrennial Defense Review* (February 6, 2006): 6. "Achieving the vision set out in this Report will only be possible by maintaining and adapting the United States' enduring alliances. Alliances are clearly one of the nation's greatest sources of strength."

counterparts. Indeed, the DoD currently has significant portions of its personnel in direct contact with foreign nationals in a variety of settings to include academic schools, operational missions, and multinational exercises.<sup>4</sup> Some DoD personnel already have relationships that can provide useful operational awareness and cultural intelligence, while many others are in a position to network and create additional contacts. The interaction between DoD personnel and foreign counterparts creates valuable relationships that can in turn generate significant levels of operational awareness and cultural intelligence. Leveraging DoD's foreign relationships and encouraging the development of new contacts is essential to safeguarding the United States' security interests worldwide.

DoD personnel are an ideal population uniquely situated to provide awareness if properly utilized. For example, military officers are encouraged throughout their careers to develop and maintain relationships with foreign counterparts while at DoD schools or during operational assignments and multinational exercises. The stated purpose is usually to gain familiarity with a foreign culture, and more importantly, to cultivate friendships with foreign officers who might currently or some day have tremendous influence in their respective militaries. Unfortunately, there is little encouragement outside of the aforementioned schools and exercise venues, and when these assignments are complete, the relationships effectively end. No institutionalized mechanism exists within the DoD that effectively fosters the development and preservation of foreign relationships. Furthermore, there is insufficient awareness of current or preexisting associations between DoD personnel and foreign counterparts to gauge whether or not beneficial relationships already exist. A thorough commitment to enhancing existing relationships, while strongly emphasizing and encouraging new interactions, will result in substantial increases in operational awareness and cultural intelligence.

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<sup>4</sup> Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) are two prime examples, but DoD personnel interact with foreign counterparts throughout the world in a variety of smaller scale operations and exercises.

## **B. THESIS PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The primary objective of this thesis is to identify a means of increasing operational awareness overseas for the DoD. With this in mind, the thesis examines the degree to which foreign relationships contribute to operational awareness and cultural intelligence. This project puts forth the hypothesis that fostering the development and preservation of foreign relationships by U.S. military personnel will significantly benefit the DoD and support U.S. policy by increasing operational awareness throughout the world. The project investigates shifting the institutional culture in the DoD concerning relationships between U.S. military personnel and foreign counterparts by developing a strategy that supports the establishment and maintenance of foreign contacts. Additionally, the thesis highlights the associated benefits of fostering foreign relationships. Historical examples of individuals with key foreign relationships and networking skills are presented to demonstrate the intrinsic value foreign contacts bring to military operations and U.S. policy objectives. Through developing an argument that favors fostering foreign relationships, this thesis seeks to provide a framework for expanding operational awareness and cultural intelligence within the DoD in support of U.S. policy objectives.

## **C. METHODOLOGY**

Upon identifying deficits in operational awareness and cultural intelligence, fostering the creation and preservation of foreign relationships will set the conditions to counter and overcome the aforementioned shortfalls. To support the assertion that foreign relationships are a viable means of generating operational awareness, a detailed analysis of the associated benefits pertaining to foreign relationships and their value to U.S. policy and military operations will be conducted. Positive results of foreign relationships, such as the establishment of trust, influence, and social networking, will be included in the analysis. Current challenges such as insufficient awareness of existing foreign contacts and relationships being underutilized or un-networked within the DoD will also be addressed. Additionally, historical examples of military and political officials possessing noteworthy foreign contacts will be presented to reinforce the notion

that foreign relationships can breed trust, influence, cultural intelligence, and ultimately, operational awareness. As a result of this research, recommendations will be presented to include a framework for establishing and maintaining foreign contacts throughout the careers of U.S. military personnel. At the conclusion of this thesis a short hypothetical scenario will be introduced followed by a strategy for implementing the thesis recommendations. The advantages of fostering foreign relationships will be thoroughly examined at this point and fundamental recommendations for institutionalizing programs that promote foreign relationships among DoD personnel will be presented.

## **D. CHAPTER OVERVIEWS**

### **1. Chapter II: Why Foreign Relationships?**

Personal relationships with foreign counterparts are a vital mechanism for gaining trust and influence. Without properly networked personnel, no amount of technology, advanced weapons systems, or troops will allow a lasting victory. Networked personnel are individuals with the ability to remain socially connected with counterparts and maximize the relationship and influence. DoD personnel must become better networked with international contemporaries in order to gain an improved understanding of regional and world conditions. Chapter II provides discussion on why foreign relationships are a vital means for generating operational awareness and cultural intelligence. The chapter includes an analysis of the benefits derived from maintaining foreign contacts and any perceived risks involved.

### **2. Chapter III: Historical Vignettes**

Throughout history examples abound of individuals using personal relationships to benefit their country or organization. This chapter presents a series of examples that demonstrate the utility of cultivating foreign relationships and highlights the impact on advancing foreign policy and military objectives. The vignettes depicted are not limited solely to U.S. examples and are meant to illustrate further the potential benefits of developing foreign contacts among U.S. military personnel.



### **3. Chapter IV: U.S. Application and Recommendations**

The benefits of foreign contacts and the historical examples presented clearly express the need for a system promoting foreign relationships among DoD personnel. The U.S. military must take advantage of the unique opportunities available to its forces and institutionalize the process of establishing and maintaining foreign relationships. Chapter IV discusses current U.S. applications relating to foreign relationships and makes recommendations to maximize benefits and improve DoD's global and regional awareness. Recommendations include such programs as the Foreign Contact Database (FCD), Funded Foreign Relationship Maintenance (FFRM), Multinational Missions and Exercises, and Reunions and Conferences.

### **4. Chapter V: Conclusion**

Chapter V summarizes the thesis and proposes a strategy for institutionalizing programs that foster the creation and continued development of foreign relationships. Any limitations to the methodology and thesis are discussed in this chapter.

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## **II. WHY FOREIGN RELATIONSHIPS?**

Knowing your enemy is not an historical U.S. strength. Americans generally do not appreciate other societies and cultures, much less “know” them well enough to facilitate accurate predictive analysis.<sup>5</sup>

### **A. WHY FOREIGN RELATIONSHIPS?**

Foreign relationships provide a wealth of information and access. America has the most technologically advanced military in the world and, “...the armed forces seems content to rely on its increasingly net-centric and technological-based systems of combat. As a result, the human element is often minimized; left as an afterthought to be utilized by ground forces on the fly...”<sup>6</sup> Fostering foreign relationships helps to understand the “human element” of operations by using the knowledge and influence gained from foreign contacts to secure military and policy objectives.

DoD personnel are uniquely positioned to exploit foreign relationships. Few Americans have access to foreign officials and very seldom do they travel or live in foreign lands for extended periods of time. Military personnel have routine contact with foreign counterparts during operational assignments, multinational exercises, and at a variety of DoD schools. Because of the numerous opportunities to interact with foreign officials, it is beneficial to encourage DoD personnel to develop relationships with foreign counterparts throughout their careers.

Knowledge of the population is critical for success in irregular warfare. Relationships with foreign officials helps provide additional intelligence, awareness, and potentially, influence. Knowledge and influence are crucial to succeeding in irregular warfare campaigns. The U.S. is at present dangerously unaware of significant cultural and operational conditions in several regions of the world. A lack of personnel who are

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<sup>5</sup> A. W. Stewart, *Friction in U.S. Foreign Policy: Cultural Difficulties with the World* (Carlisle Papers in Security Strategies: Strategic Studies Institute, 2006), 4.

<sup>6</sup> J. Helfers, “Hearts and Minds in 2025: How Foreign and Domestic Culture Will Shape the Future Battlefield,” *Beyond Shock and Awe: Warfare in the 21st Century*, 2006, 130.

socially networked with foreign counterparts contributes to this shortfall and the assertion that, “America needs to maintain cultural relations in areas where its own intelligence resources are lacking,” is a point worth addressing.<sup>7</sup> While foreign relationships are not a “silver bullet,” they offer several advantages that can significantly benefit military operations and the execution of foreign policy.

## **B. BENEFITS OF FOREIGN RELATIONSHIPS**

There are significant advantages to establishing and maintaining robust relationships among foreign counterparts. Interaction with foreign contacts creates a sense of familiarity with the culture and provides insight into country and regional perspectives. This familiarity creates a “culturally savvy” service member who is better prepared to service his country:

Cross-cultural savvy implies that an officer can see perspectives outside his or her own boundaries. It does not imply, however, that the officer abandons the Army or American culture in pursuit of a relativistic worldview. Instead, the future strategic leader is grounded in national and Army values, but is also able to anticipate, understand, and empathize with the values, assumptions, and norms of other groups, organizations, and nations.<sup>8</sup>

The insight gained from these relationships provides valuable cultural intelligence in addition to more accurate assessments of regional and global issues. This improved understanding can potentially aid military leaders and policymakers in developing more effective plans and strategies while reducing the likelihood of alienating and angering foreign populations.

Fostering foreign relationships also sends strong messages to allies. By developing trusted relationships with foreign counterparts, the U.S. demonstrates mutual respect towards fellow military and defense officials from allied nations. This respect helps break down cultural barriers and eliminate negative stereotypes. Having

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<sup>7</sup> Helfers, “Hearts and Minds in 2025: How Foreign and Domestic Culture Will Shape the Future Battlefield,” 185.

<sup>8</sup> D. Snider, “The Future of the Army Profession,” *Strategic Leadership of the Army Profession*, 2005, 615.

relationships with foreign officers and defense officials promotes trust and a more open exchange of ideas among counterparts. Trust facilitates important missions such as coalition building and intelligence sharing. Personal friendships further aid in the establishment of trust among counterparts: “Within relationships that have both personal and professional bases, trust can be built more easily and trouble can be resolved more easily.”<sup>9</sup> Additionally, as relationships progress over time a bond can develop between counterparts that remain strong even when country relations falter:

...sacrifices made in a relationship, are not seen as bygones. It suggests that individuals are likely to be more committed to a relationship when they have more of a history together and they are likely to make more of an effort to maintain a good relationship when trouble occurs...<sup>10</sup>

Counterparts who build and develop trust also gain a level of influence over one another, which can be extremely valuable in promoting U.S. interests. A foreign counterpart is more likely to share information with a trusted American contact than a stranger or casual acquaintance. Trust and influence among DoD personnel and foreign contacts can potentially provide more intelligence and access to regions where information has previously been insufficient or restricted. The end results of fostering foreign relationships are significant increases in operational awareness.

### **C. GENERATING OPERATIONAL AWARENESS**

Instituting a culture within the DoD that encourages the pursuit of foreign associations ultimately helps generate operational awareness. Foreign relationships breed familiarity with counterparts and their culture. Familiarity builds trust, which is instrumental in gaining both influence and operational awareness. While high-tech weapon systems and overwhelming combat power are important military instruments, they can not win hearts and minds or exert as much influence as a few individuals properly networked with the right connections. Operational awareness and cultural intelligence have become increasingly valuable when compared with conventional

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<sup>9</sup> F. Six, *The Trouble with Trust* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2005), 51.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

capabilities as expressed by Major General Robert Scales (Ret.) when he stated that , “...intimate knowledge of the enemy’s motivation, intent, will, tactical methods, and cultural environment have proven to be far more important than smart bombs, aircraft, and expansive bandwidth.”<sup>11</sup> Fostering foreign relationships within the DoD is a means that will generate additional operational awareness and cultural intelligence. While there are inherent risks involved in encouraging contact with foreign contemporaries, there are also extreme benefits, which will be highlighted further in subsequent chapters.

#### **D. ASSOCIATED RISKS OF FOREIGN RELATIONSHIPS**

Despite the benefits, there are risks associated with encouraging foreign relationships among DoD personnel. First and foremost is the danger of disclosing classified information. U.S. military officers have access to information and weapon systems data that are highly classified. An argument can be made that having contact with foreign counterparts potentially puts the security of classified materials and projects in jeopardy. While it is possible that a foreign contact might attempt to exploit a relationship to obtain sensitive information, DoD personnel following established security procedures can be expected to properly safeguard classified data. Both American and foreign counterparts will undoubtedly use their relationships to gather valuable intelligence, but classified information can be protected and kept outside the relationship by remaining vigilant and adhering to security protocols. Security clearances for DoD personnel should not have to suffer because an officer has numerous foreign contacts. As long as personnel properly manage their relationships, sensitive information will be adequately protected.

A second concern regarding foreign counterparts is that these relationships could adversely influence DoD personnel to favor the friendship over the obligation to their country. While friendships with foreign contacts will create a certain amount of influence over the individual, the relationships should not be powerful enough to sway loyalty. Contact with foreign counterparts will undoubtedly influence DoD personnel, but influence is a two way affair. U.S. officers will also exert influence over their foreign

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<sup>11</sup> R. Scales, “Transformation,” *Armed Forces Journal* (2005): 24-5.

colleagues. Concerns that some American personnel might possibly betray the U.S. if they develop relationships with foreign counterparts undermines their sworn oath of loyalty and commitment to duty. While historically there have been cases of American military personnel conducting espionage, there is no conclusive evidence that suggests fostering the development of foreign relationships puts the DoD at further risk of betrayal. Disloyal individuals are inspired to become traitors by additional factors than being influenced by a foreign counterpart and their example should only reinforce a sense of vigilance towards security procedures rather than discrediting the loyalty of personnel who currently serve.

Another risk associated with foreign relationships is the concern that personnel could unintentionally create an international incident affecting country relations or national security. This concern is unfounded as U.S. military personnel are in constant contact with foreign officials throughout the world. Encouraging relationships with foreign counterparts should actually decrease the risk of international incidents as personnel will gain additional insight into a contact's culture, which will in turn help prevent improper conduct.

An additional concern regarding contact with foreign counterparts is that not all personnel are well suited or willing to have relationships with foreign officials. The process of fostering foreign relationships should not be compulsory. The DoD should encourage individuals who both desire and have a talent for developing foreign associations. Personnel who lack the aptitude or willingness to bond with foreign counterparts will potentially create problems if they are forced to interact outside of their assigned duties. Developing methods to screen personnel properly will assist in determining which individuals are aptly suited for foreign relationships and offset the risks of encouraging unsuitable candidates from developing contacts.

Finally, foreign relationships should be viewed as long-term commitments rather than temporary or casual friendships. In many cultures relationships are considered lifetime commitments, "Culture and human relationships are not amorphous blobs of customs and habits. Relationships have and require structures, regular practices, and the

give-and-take of requests, demands, and commitments.”<sup>12</sup> DoD personnel should be encouraged to continue relationships when assignments end and respect the friendships they have developed with foreign counterparts. Maintaining foreign relationships can potentially yield benefits years after their establishment and should, therefore, be constantly nurtured at every opportunity.

While there are several risks and concerns regarding the perceived dangers of foreign relationships, the potential benefits outweigh the negatives. Monitoring DoD relationships and remaining aware of security concerns will mitigate the risks involved with participating in foreign relationships. The DoD must have a certain level of trust and faith in its personnel to capitalize on the advantages of fostering foreign relationships.

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<sup>12</sup> R. C. Solomon, and F. Flores, *Building Trust in Business, Politics, Relationships, and Life* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2001), 48.



### **III. HISTORICAL VIGNETTES**

Personnel with foreign relationships bring immense value to the DoD and have been credited with facilitating U.S. policy objectives and providing critical support for military operations. The previous chapter highlights several advantages gained from encouraging relationships with foreign counterparts; however, a certain level of vagueness remains in quantifying the value these relationships bring to the DoD. Examining historical cases of military officials who were able to exploit foreign relationships effectively is essential to achieving a higher understanding of the potential benefits presented from fostering these relationships. While precise measures of effectiveness are difficult to establish, historical examples help provide evidence that significant advantages can be gained through having military personnel with foreign associations. The following vignettes provide examples of officers achieving favorable outcomes as a result of having previously developed key relationships with foreign counterparts. These individuals furthered their nations' interests and standing through the skillful management of foreign relationships or by merely having key associations at the outset. Regardless of the method employed to leverage relationships, these vignettes provide evidence that foreign associations can benefit military operations.

#### **A. T. E. LAWRENCE**

British military legend Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Edward Lawrence, better known as T. E. Lawrence, is the quintessential example of the power of foreign relationships. Lawrence was instrumental in the success of the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire during his assignment in Arabia as a British liaison officer from 1916 to 1918. His extensive experience traveling throughout Arabia and numerous contacts in the region provided a wealth of operational awareness and cultural intelligence to British forces. Lawrence's previous dealings in Arabia, as a student conducting research on medieval crusader castles and later as a field archaeologist, provided an exceptional knowledge of the land and its people:

I had been many years going up and down the Semitic East before the war, learning the manners of the villagers and tribesman and citizens of Syria and Mesopotamia...In addition, I had seen something of the political forces working in the minds of the Middle East, and especially had noted everywhere sure signs of the decay of imperial Turkey.<sup>13</sup>

Lawrence's understanding of the region and its culture enabled him to easily interact with Arabs and earn their trust and respect.

Lawrence's position as an officer in the British Army, as well as his understanding of Arab culture, allowed him the opportunity to cultivate strong relationships with influential Arab leaders. While assigned as an advisor to Prince Feisal bin Hussein, a key leader during the Arab Revolt, Lawrence established a rapport that ultimately benefited British interests in the region. The ensuing friendship between Feisal and Lawrence provided a critical link between Britain and the Arab Army. Lawrence granted assurances of British support for the Arab cause while influencing Feisal and other Arab leaders to refrain from attacking the occupied city of Medina, keeping Turkish troops garrisoned in the city tied up in its defense. He further convinced Feisal to change tactics and attack the Hejaz railway supplying Medina. The routine ambushes and bombings along the railway by Feisal's Arab Irregulars created a, "Maximum of loss and discomfort for the enemy," and forced the Turks to devote additional troops to secure the rail line, resulting in British forces gaining significant maneuver advantages in the region.<sup>14</sup>

T. E. Lawrence exemplifies the tremendous benefits of establishing foreign relationships. He proactively sought foreign contacts during his assignment in Arabia and used those relationships to further British political and military interests. Many of Lawrence's superiors and peers did not consider his affinity for Arab culture and its people productive or inspiring until he achieved tangible successes, such as the capture of

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<sup>13</sup> T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom, A Triumph* (New York: George Doran Publishing Company, 1926), 55.

<sup>14</sup> J. E. Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T. E. Lawrence* (UK: Littlehampton Book Services (LBS), 1976), 150.

the strategic port city of Aqaba.<sup>15</sup> Lawrence's interest in Arabs and his respect for their culture were, however, appreciated amongst the Arab community in general. As one Arab nationalist observed of Lawrence:

It appears to me that this man is different from the rest of the Englishmen whom we have seen so far, that he listens attentively to the political organization of the Arabs and that his questions show a depth in the subject which is not present except with one who has in it a pleasure and a passion.<sup>16</sup>

Lawrence's ability to establish relationships with Arab leaders, in particular Prince Feisal, resulted in significant gains for British and Arab forces. The example of T. E. Lawrence effectively demonstrates the influence foreign relationships can bring to military operations.

## **B. MAJOR GENERAL EDWARD G. LANSDALE**

Major General Edward Lansdale is a compelling example of the importance personal relationships with foreign counterparts serve in furthering U.S. interests. Lansdale's development of foreign contacts in the Philippines is particularly relevant in demonstrating the enormous benefit foreign relationships bring to U.S. foreign policy and military operations. Throughout his service in the Philippines at the end of World War II and later during the Huk Insurgency, Lansdale met and befriended influential Filipino officers and government officials, one of whom later became president. His keen interest in Filipino culture, particularly the music, allowed Lansdale a mechanism to effectively dialogue with Filipinos and understand, "...something they hold dear to their hearts."<sup>17</sup> Lansdale used personal relationships and familiarity with Filipino culture to provide operational awareness and cultural intelligence that shaped U.S. policy and operations in the Philippines for over a decade.

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<sup>15</sup> Mack, *A Prince of Our Disorder: The Life of T. E. Lawrence*, 153.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 131-2.

<sup>17</sup> C. B. Currey, *Edward Lansdale, The Unquiet American* (Washington, DC: Brassey's, 1998), 26-7.

Lansdale understood the utility of foreign relationships and after World War II maintained relations with many of his contacts from the Philippines to include Major Mamerto Montemayor. In 1950, while stationed in Virginia, Montemayor introduced Lansdale to Philippine Congressman Ramon Magsaysay who was visiting Washington on official business as the chairman of the Philippine Congress' Defense Committee.<sup>18</sup> During their meeting both Lansdale and Magsaysay discovered they had similar positions regarding a counterinsurgency strategy to defeat the Huk rebels.<sup>19</sup> Magsaysay was thoroughly impressed with Lansdale's knowledge of the Philippine situation. Upon his appointment to Secretary of National Defense later the same year, Magsaysay asked President Quirino to personally request Lansdale's assignment as an advisor to the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG) Philippines for the purposes of assisting the Philippine government in its counterinsurgency efforts against the Huk rebels.<sup>20</sup>

While assigned to JUSMAG Philippines, Lansdale worked closely with Magsaysay advising the defense secretary directly on developing an effective anti-Huk strategy. The two men eventually became roommates when security at Magsaysay's residence outside Manila became unsafe due to increased guerilla activity.<sup>21</sup> Lansdale's direct access and growing influence with Magsaysay allowed the U.S. an unprecedented level of operational awareness as both men together developed a strategy for defeating the Huks. Magsaysay willingly received Lansdale's counsel, and with the support of JUSMAG and Washington, enacted programs that improved the professionalism of the Philippine military and ultimately gained decisive support from the population. Lansdale's efforts during the anti-Huk campaign helped elevate Magsaysay's reputation and in 1953, Ramon Magsaysay was elected president with more than double the number of votes cast for the incumbent Quirino.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Currey, *Edward Lansdale, The Unquiet American*, 70.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 70-1.

<sup>20</sup> L. M. Greenberg, *The Hukbalahap Insurrection: A Case Study of a Successful Anti-Insurgency Operation in the Philippines, 1946-1955* (U.S. Government Printing Office: Washington, DC, 1987), 96.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> Currey, *Edward Lansdale, The Unquiet American*, 130.

Major General Edward Lansdale remains a remarkable testament of the potential benefits foreign relationships present to U.S. policy and military objectives. His connections to key Filipino military and political officials made him a pivotal figure in the successes of the anti-Huk campaign of the early 1950s:

A prominent factor in the successful anti-guerilla campaign was the close, personal relationship that developed between Edward Lansdale and Ramon Magsaysay. This relationship provided an effective conduit through which American advice affected Philippine actions during this period. To overlook Lansdale's role would be to neglect a significant chapter of this story.<sup>23</sup>

Without Lansdale's efforts to establish and maintain effective relationships, the Huk insurgency might have ravaged the country further and eventually toppled the young democracy. The Philippines was not the only country where Lansdale effectively cultivated foreign relationships, but it remains his most significant and enduring example of how personal relationships can facilitate military objectives and influence foreign policy.

#### **C. GENERAL ANTHONY C. ZINNI AND PERVEZ MUSHARRAF**

General Anthony Zinni's relationship with President Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan is evidence that personal friendships with foreign counterparts are sometimes leveraged on multiple occasions to aid U.S. policy and military interests. This vignette also demonstrates the utility of allowing military personnel to continue relationships even when country relations sour. Zinni's close friendship with Musharraf allowed the two to work through several bureaucratic obstacles at the national level, which quite possibly prevented a nuclear exchange between Pakistan and India and additionally facilitated vital assistance in anti-terrorism activities before and after the attacks of 9/11.

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<sup>23</sup> Currey, *Edward Lansdale, The Unquiet American*, 95.

While assigned as CENTCOM Commander, General Zinni first met and befriended Pakistani Army Chief of Staff, General Pervez Musharraf during a visit to Pakistan. After several days of meetings in April of 1999, both Generals had developed a strong rapport with one another:

It was a great meeting, despite the chill cast by our [U.S.] sanctions. As I was leaving, we both agreed to stay in close touch (we exchanged our home telephone numbers). Our friendship would later prove to be enormously valuable to both our countries.<sup>24</sup>

Indeed, one month later Pakistani forces initiated an incursion over the Line of Control with India into an area known as Kargil. India reacted by counterattacking with its armed forces and after almost a month of fighting, both armies had conducted massive troop mobilizations along the Line of Control with fears of a possible nuclear exchange surfacing among the international community. As a result, the Clinton administration dispatched Zinni to Pakistan in late June of 1999 to meet with Musharraf and Prime Minister Sharif.<sup>25</sup> Because of his close association with Musharraf, Zinni obtained full support in convincing Sharif to order a Pakistani withdrawal from Kargil in exchange for a meeting with President Clinton to end Pakistan's isolation from the United States.<sup>26</sup>

Later the same year after Musharraf came to power following a coup, he opted to first phone his trusted friend "Tony" Zinni to explain his reasons for ousting Sharif, before returning President Clinton's call.<sup>27</sup> During the conversation Musharraf insisted the coup was a last resort aimed at saving the country from a corrupt government and confided in Zinni, "I don't care what most others think about my motivations or intentions; but it's important to me that you know what they are."<sup>28</sup> As a result of Washington's disapproval of the coup, Zinni was ordered to cease communication with

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<sup>24</sup> Tom Clancy, Tony Koltz, and Tony Zinni, *Battle Ready* (New York: Putnam Publishing Group, 2004), 346.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 347.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Pervez Musharraf.net, [http://pervez.musharraf.net/Pervez\\_Musharraf.htm](http://pervez.musharraf.net/Pervez_Musharraf.htm) (accessed October 16, 2006).

<sup>28</sup> Clancy, Zinni, and Koltz, *Battle Ready*, 349.

Musharraf.<sup>29</sup> The directive lasted for only two months; whereupon, Zinni was asked to resume contact with Musharraf and request his assistance relating to attacks planned by terrorists residing in Pakistan against U.S. tourists throughout the Middle East. Musharraf responded by arresting the terrorists and allowing U.S. agents special access to the prisoners and their confiscated computer equipment.<sup>30</sup> This unprecedented cooperation by Pakistani authorities would have been virtually inconceivable without Zinni's close association with Musharraf.

General Zinni's personal relationship with Pervez Musharraf has furthered U.S. policy and interests. Their involvement with one another prevented a possible nuclear exchange with India, led to the capture of key terrorists planning attacks against Americans, and currently continues to influence U.S. relations with Pakistan positively, a key ally in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). This example illustrates the benefits of encouraging relationships like Zinni's and Musharraf's when country to country relations fail.

#### **D. LIEUTENANT COMMANDER JOSEPH AGRA AND THE 2003 PHILIPPINE COUP ATTEMPT**

U.S. Navy Commander Joseph Agra is an example of a military officer leveraging established relationships at the right time and place to rescue U.S. personnel and prevent unnecessary bloodshed. During an assignment as the Pacific Command (PACOM) Liaison Officer to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) in 2003, then Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) Agra utilized preexisting foreign relationships to diffuse a crisis situation and assist an allied nation. While personnel with key relationships are not always positioned to prevent catastrophe, the following vignette demonstrates the results of having a well networked individual in position during a moment of crisis.

On July 27, 2003, a group of dissenting mid-level officers known as the "Magdalo Group" and about 300 soldiers from the AFP captured the Oakwood Hotel located in

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<sup>29</sup> Clancy, Zinni, and Koltz, *Battle Ready*, 348.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 349.

Makati, a business and financial suburb of Manila.<sup>31</sup> The rebel soldiers sealed off the building, effectively taking hotel guests and staff hostage. After placing charges of C-4 explosives throughout the building, the coup leaders demanded that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo relinquish power and order the release of former President Joseph Estrada. Besides being a hotel, the Oakwood had permanent apartments that were home to numerous Western ex-patriots including two U.S. Embassy officials and the Australian Ambassador<sup>32</sup>. Initial attempts by the Philippine government to negotiate a peaceful solution to the crisis were rejected by the Magdalo Group.

LCDR Agra had been stationed in the Philippines since January of 2000 and during that time had befriended numerous junior, mid-level, and high ranking officers in the AFP. Three days prior to the Oakwood Mutiny, LCDR Agra was notified by several junior ranking officers in the AFP that there would be a coup within 72 hours.<sup>33</sup> Upon initiation of the coup, LCDR Agra quickly determined that several of the coup plotters were contacts from previous associations to include Captain Ben Gambala, the Baron, or Class Leader, of the Philippine Military Academy's Class of 1995 whom LCDR Agra had trained in acquisition systems for the AFP.<sup>34</sup> Since LCDR Agra still maintained relationships with several of the rogue officers, he traveled to the Oakwood Hotel, navigating through several AFP roadblocks using his military connections to high-ranking officers to gain access to the AFP's mobile command center. Upon consultation with the U.S. Ambassador and the AFP's ground commander, Major General Emmanuel Teodosio, LCDR Agra was granted access and escorted inside the Oakwood Hotel to negotiate the release of the American and Western hostages.<sup>35</sup> After discussing the situation with Captain Gambala, LCDR Agra was given permission to evacuate the hostages using buses provided by the AFP. The Magdalo Group later surrendered, but the AFP's plan to resolve the crisis was to level the Oakwood Hotel using artillery and

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<sup>31</sup> Luis V. Teodoro, "The Coup Next Time," *Today*, Manila, Philippines, July 29, 2003, <http://www.worldpress.org/Asia/1384.cfm> (accessed November 1, 2006).

<sup>32</sup> CDR Joseph Agra, email interview, November 12, 2006.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.



recoilless rifle fire. LCDR Agra overheard Major Generals Teodosio and Efren Abu discussing the battle plan, “Ayala-Sobel can build another hotel, but we cannot build another republic.”<sup>36</sup> Fortunately, the Magdalo Group’s surrender prevented bloodshed, but LCDR Agra’s intervention helped set the conditions for a peaceful settlement.

LCDR Agra’s relationship with several of the Magdalo Group officers and high ranking loyal AFP officers directly resulted in the peaceful resolution of a potentially deadly situation. The incident generated goodwill towards the U.S. in addition to the appreciation of the Philippine and Australian governments. Lieutenant Commander Agra will not always be able to use his foreign relationships to prevent violence, but this example shows that having networked personnel available during a crisis situation increases the opportunity for a favorable outcome.

## **E. AFTERTHOUGHTS**

The vignettes present evidence of the power foreign relationships bring to military objectives and foreign policy. Regardless of the apparent benefits presented by fostering these relationships, the concept of promoting foreign associations is not universally accepted within the DoD. In some of the highlighted cases, the individuals profiled faced an institutional culture or bureaucracy that was not supportive of maintaining foreign relationships. In other instances, sheer good fortune seemed a factor in having networked personnel in the right place at the right time. This raises the question of how to place individuals with valuable relationships in areas where they can best support U.S. policy objectives. The foremost challenge relating to fostering foreign relationships is the creation of programs that will allow the DoD to find and harvest valuable foreign relationships while allowing the positioning of personnel in assignments that maximize their contacts. The following chapter will discuss programs that can assist in establishing and maintaining foreign contacts.

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<sup>36</sup> CDR Joseph Agra, email interview, November 12, 2006.

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## IV. U.S. APPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

...the United States must also work with new international partners in less familiar areas of the world. This means the Department [of Defense] must be prepared to develop a new team of leaders and operators who are comfortable working in remote regions of the world, dealing with local and tribal communities, adapting to foreign languages and cultures and working with local networks to further U.S. and partner interests through personal engagement, persuasion and quiet influence – rather than through military force alone.<sup>37</sup>

The previous chapters demonstrate the significant advantages of having DoD personnel with established foreign relationships. Individuals with key associations have historically leveraged foreign contacts for the benefit of the DoD and U.S. foreign policy interests. Unfortunately, few entities within the DoD actually foster foreign relationships. Foreign Area Officers (FAO) and Special Operations Forces (SOF) are examples of communities that actively establish and maintain foreign relationships, but they comprise only a small percentage of DoD personnel. While the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review Report recommends an expansion of both FAO and SOF programs, the two communities will continue to represent a narrow cross-section of the armed services.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, personnel in these highly specialized branches tend to start establishing foreign contacts later in their careers once they begin FAO and SOF assignments.<sup>39</sup>

The following is a summary of the challenges the DoD faces relating to establishing and maintaining foreign relationships among its personnel: 1) There is virtually no awareness regarding the extent of foreign contacts among DoD personnel. No system exists to track current and preexisting foreign associations or to determine if personnel have contacts that might benefit the DoD. The DoD also can not accurately depict which personnel have relationships to a particular country, region, or a specific foreign leader , 2) DoD personnel are generally not afforded the opportunity to further

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<sup>37</sup> Quadrennial Defense Review Report, 2006, 89.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 44-5, 78.

<sup>39</sup> FAOs start training as Captains and are qualified for assignment as Majors. Army Special Forces soldiers are usually trained and ready for assignment as Sergeants, while officers are available as Captains.

develop foreign relationships outside of current DoD schools, exercises, or assignments. Associations tend to deteriorate once assignments, courses, or joint exercises end. 3) The institutional culture of the DoD does not put a high premium on establishing and maintaining foreign relationships. Military personnel are first and foremost expected to remain battle focused at the exclusion of all other distractions including maintaining foreign contacts.

While the DoD faces significant challenges related to fostering and maintaining foreign relationships, there are five areas where the DoD can focus efforts towards creating an institutional culture that promotes foreign relationships. Establishing a Foreign Contact Database, providing Funded Foreign Relationship Maintenance, increasing and encouraging multinational missions and exercises, expanding foreign education and cultural immersion opportunities, and promoting reunions and conferences are all areas where the DoD can focus and improve the capacity to promote and sustain foreign relationships.

#### **A. FOREIGN CONTACT DATABASE (FCD)**

The Foreign Contact Database (FCD) has two primary objectives related to fostering foreign relationships. The first objective is to provide awareness concerning foreign associations that currently exists within the DoD and the second is to create a permanent resource for cataloguing and maintaining contacts throughout the careers of DoD personnel and possibly beyond. By meeting these two objectives, the FCD will provide the DoD the ability to track and maintain foreign contacts throughout the careers of its personnel.

At present, the DoD has no formal mechanism for tracking foreign relationships among its personnel. For instance, should the DoD need to know which personnel have associations with Chinese military personnel, the records would most likely only show those military attaches who have worked in China as FAOs. A FCD would allow the DoD an in depth listing of personnel who have associations with Chinese military, either as attaches, UN Observers, or while attending any foreign military schools where both nations might send personnel.

The FCD is designed to allow each DoD military or civilian employee the ability to input foreign contacts into the database under their personal account, which would be linked to their pre-existing Defense Knowledge Online (DKO) account. As an officer or soldier develops foreign relationships during his or her career, the contacts are added to their respective file in the FCD. Additionally, the names of any foreign officers attending schools or courses with DoD personnel will be automatically inputted into the FCD of each DoD student attending the same course. This capability provides awareness of the extent of foreign contacts among DoD personnel and further allows the ability to leverage relationships in the future should a contact become particularly influential or otherwise significant at a later date.

Another benefit of the FCD is that it allows DoD personnel a permanent platform in which to store contact information on foreign counterparts. FCD users would be able to utilize the database to store emails, phone numbers, and addresses for each contact stored in their personal account. Additionally, the FCD would allow the user the option of synchronizing his or her personal foreign contact listings to a personal data assistant (PDA), external hard drive, or some other form of portable storage device. Should a DoD employee lose a PDA or a computer hard drive crashes, information on a user's respective foreign contacts will still be intact in the FCD. As long as the user routinely updates contact information in the FCD, the user will retain an enhanced ability to maintain foreign relationships. The FCD serves as an enduring means of maintaining the foreign contacts of DoD personnel.

The Foreign Contact Database has dual roles: One of providing the DoD situational awareness regarding the amount and extent of foreign contacts among military and civilian personnel. The database allows comprehensive knowledge of foreign relationships where there was previously scant information available. The extensive information contained in the FCD, however, must be safeguarded in its entirety with access granted only to users and properly vetted security professionals maintaining and analyzing the database. The second role of the FCD is to allow DoD personnel an augmented ability to maintain contact information on foreign counterparts. Should a DoD employee somehow lose contact information on a foreign counterpart, the employee

will be able to access the FCD and reload the lost information. The FCD serves as a valuable tool for the DoD as an organization desiring awareness of foreign relationships and to personnel striving to maintain contact with foreign counterparts.

## **B. FUNDED FOREIGN RELATIONSHIP MAINTENANCE (FFRM)**

While the FCD helps catalogue and track foreign contacts among DoD personnel, other programs are necessary to help foster, encourage, and maintain foreign relationships. One program designed to sustain foreign relationships is Funded Foreign Relationship Maintenance (FFRM). U.S. military personnel encounter foreign counterparts throughout their careers and while some commands might actively encourage the establishment of foreign relationships, there are presently few official programs designed to expand and sustain these foreign associations. FFRM is a program intended to allow DoD personnel the opportunity to broaden existing relationships.

FFRM authorizes personnel with foreign contacts periodic funded travel to visit counterparts for the purposes of building rapport and developing the relationship. These Foreign Travel Visits (FTVs) should be authorized under FFRM for personnel with legitimate contacts every three years for two-week increments. The visits will permit DoD personnel the opportunity to strengthen foreign relationships and thereby gain additional knowledge and influence. FTVs will be categorized as temporary duty (TDY) for qualifying service members to include funding for travel, per diem, and no charged leave days. Consideration should also be given in certain cases to funding foreign counterpart visits to the U.S. when visits to the country in question may not be feasible.

When considering which personnel qualify for FTVs, the question arises concerning what should be considered a legitimate foreign contact. FFRM should have a process of vetting which contacts merit FTVs and also which personnel are capable or deserving of maintaining foreign relationships. Some foreign contacts might be deemed harmful or incompatible with U.S. interests while some DoD personnel might not be responsible enough or desire foreign relationships. Additionally, some foreign contacts may be at risk in their own countries by having relationships with U.S. personnel and may not be suitable for visits. Before a FTV is approved, the DoD should ensure that the

recipients are worthy of sponsorship under FFRM. The process of vetting contacts and personnel is essential to assuring that funding for FFRM is properly allocated and U.S. security interests are upheld. The negative consequences of the vetting process are that errors will inevitable occur. Contacts deemed inappropriate may actually prove beneficial at a later date. Also, the suitability of some personnel for FFRM might be initially misjudged. Therefore, a level of flexibility should be incorporated into the vetting process to allow continuous review of both contacts and personnel. Understanding that the process of establishing and maintaining relationships is an inexact science, the governing body tasked with managing FFRM should recognize the same principle when deciding the viability of contacts and DoD personnel alike.

Besides strengthening relationships, FFRM increases cultural awareness. Foreign travel and time spent with foreign contacts is an effective method of gaining cultural awareness. FTVs can provide immeasurable experience to DoD personnel. Considering the extent of knowledge that foreign allies learn in the U.S. through funded travel, FTVs can provide similar benefits to DoD personnel by further cementing existing relationships and increasing understanding of foreign cultures. Since foreign relationships can benefit the DoD, funding periodic travel for the purposes of maintaining contacts should be supported by the DoD and enacted under FFRM.

### **C. MULTINATIONAL MISSIONS AND EXERCISES**

Participation in multinational missions and exercises provides a unique opportunity to network with foreign counterparts and create lasting friendships that benefit DoD personnel and U.S. policy objectives. While DoD military and non-military personnel routinely participate with allied nations in a variety of multinational exercises, there is seldom an emphasis to maintain relationships beyond the training. Once the exercise or mission ends, the relationship also ends. A greater emphasis must be made on establishing and maintaining foreign contacts.

United Nations Peacekeeping and Observer missions are particularly beneficial in establishing foreign contacts and provide a wide range of nations from which to network with. Unfortunately, UN Peacekeeping and Observer missions are not currently counted

as joint assignments and are therefore not considered desirable by most officers. These missions should, however, be given joint credit since the participants in these missions work with joint and multinational military personnel. Giving joint credit for UN tours will encourage DoD personnel to participate in these missions and allow additional opportunities to acquire foreign contacts (Ms. Jean Lute-Hull, United Nations Deputy Director of Peacekeeping Operations, interview, March 2006). Participation in UN missions helps establish foreign relationships while having U.S. military personnel serving on the UN planning staff provides added situational awareness and influence. Additionally, increased involvement in UN operations by DoD personnel will help improve the United State's relationship with the UN and further U.S. policy objectives.

#### **D. FOREIGN EDUCATION AND CULTURAL IMMERSION**

Foreign education and cultural immersion programs are other vehicles that foster the establishment of foreign relationships. Expansion of programs that educate and immerse DoD personnel in foreign cultures provides significant increases in operational awareness and cultural intelligence. Immersion in foreign cultures and exposure to the population allows personnel unprecedented access and knowledge regarding foreign societies.

Foreign exchange and immersion programs bring similar experiences to U.S. personnel as those benefiting foreign counterparts in allied countries. The DoD should, as a result, extensively increase exchange and immersion opportunities for personnel at the earlier portions of their career. For instance, the DoD's military service academies provide a limited number of cadets the privilege of studying abroad for a semester. Foreign study programs should incorporate a larger portion of service academy personnel and should also be offered to ROTC cadets at the university level. Exposure of cadets to foreign exchange and immersion programs allows junior personnel to start networking and establish foreign contacts much earlier in their careers.

Cultural immersion opportunities for mid-level personnel should also be expanded, such as the Olmstead program, which offers scholarships for O-3 level officers to study at foreign universities and earn Master's level degrees. Increasing Olmstead



type programs to educate and immerse a larger portion of mid-level officers will further bestow more chances to establish and maintain foreign relationships while increasing operational awareness and cultural intelligence.

The downside of expanding foreign education and immersion programs is the strain on troop manning levels and assignment requirements. Additionally, millions of dollars must be spent to send personnel to education and immersion training, but money spend on these programs will be inexpensive relative to other programs and exceedingly more effective than doing nothing. While there is a slight downside to increasing the range of these programs, the benefits will outstrip the costs as servicemen and women will have the opportunity to establish foreign relationships much earlier in their careers and be afforded additional chances to maintain contacts.

#### **E. REUNIONS AND CONFERENCES**

Foreign military officers attend numerous DoD schools and courses each year providing the opportunities for U.S. military personnel to establish relationships. However, these relationships are often difficult to maintain after training when the participants are from different countries and potentially separated by thousands of miles. Reunions and conferences provide a venue for sustaining associations with foreign counterparts and can also help establish new contacts.

Reunions for DoD schools and courses are an efficient means of bringing large groups of personnel and foreign contacts together to maintain relationships. At a reunion personnel can meet with several contacts simultaneously versus the FTV which focuses more individual contacts. The DoD should collectively incorporate reunions into schools and courses that are heavy with international military students. Funding should be devoted to bring foreign officers to reunions whenever possible. While funds should be allocated to pay travel expenses, DoD personnel traveling to reunions should at least be placed in a Permissive TDY status and not charged leave days for attending reunions whenever funding is unavailable.

Conferences are an effective method of bringing personnel and foreign military members together to both establish and maintain relationships. While conferences can

sometimes turn into reunions when the right attendees are invited, they remain more flexible than reunions. Conferences can be held in the U.S. or various locations throughout the world when sponsored, for instance, by Geographic Combatant Commands (GCCs) or other DoD organizations. Conferences can also be tailored to address regional issues for a more focused audience of foreign contacts.

Reunions and conferences are an additional means of developing foreign contacts. Both types of meetings provide a centralized forum for establishing and maintaining multiple foreign relationships. While reunions and conferences may not be as personalized as individual FTVs, they are an efficient method of gathering personnel and foreign contacts in one place to establish and maintain relationships.

## **F. AFTERTHOUGHTS**

The DoD has several options available to leverage foreign relationships. Rather than focusing on one method, the DoD should incorporate multiple approaches to set the conditions that establish and sustain foreign relationships. FFRM, multinational missions and exercises, foreign education and immersion programs, and reunions and conferences are a balanced strategy that together will maximize the advantages of fostering foreign relationships. Personnel should start networking early in their careers to fully capitalize on respective contacts. Supporting exchange and immersion programs for cadets is the starting point for establishing relationships while the multitude of DoD schools, courses, conferences, reunions, and Foreign Travel Visits help further establish and maintain foreign relationships throughout the careers of DoD personnel. Fostering foreign relationships should be considered a continuous process and the DoD should assist by shepherding the collection and sustainment of foreign contacts with programs like the Foreign Contact Database. Additionally, the institutional culture of the DoD concerning foreign relationships should support and encourage personnel to actively seek opportunities to develop contacts. Evaluations of DoD personnel should take into consideration, recognize, and reward military servicemen and women who are adept at establishing and maintaining relationships. Professional pay, increased access to FFRM and immersion programs should be considered rewards for personnel who have proven

capable of developing foreign relationships. Institutionalizing the process of fostering foreign relationships will provide unprecedented operational awareness and further U.S. security interests worldwide.

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## **V. CONCLUSION**

...if the government and various intelligence agencies work with their counterparts in other nations, even if at one time they regarded them suspiciously (as was the case with Sudan), the payoff can be much greater for everyone involved, and much worse for the terrorists that threaten every free country.<sup>40</sup>

### **A. THESIS SUMMARY**

The primary objective of this thesis is to identify a means of increasing operational awareness overseas for the DoD. With this in mind, the thesis examines the degree to which foreign relationships contribute to operational awareness and cultural intelligence. This project puts forth the hypothesis that fostering the development and preservation of foreign relationships by U.S. military personnel will significantly benefit the DoD and support U.S. policy by increasing operational awareness throughout the world. The project investigates shifting the institutional culture in the DoD concerning relationships between U.S. military personnel and foreign counterparts by developing a strategy that supports the establishment and maintenance of foreign contacts. Additionally, the thesis highlights the associated benefits of fostering foreign relationships. Historical examples of individuals with key foreign relationships and networking skills are presented to demonstrate the intrinsic value foreign contacts bring to military operations and U.S. policy objectives. Through developing an argument that favors fostering foreign relationships, this thesis seeks to provide a framework for expanding operational awareness and cultural intelligence within the DoD in support of U.S. policy objectives.

### **B. LIMITATIONS**

While this thesis discusses numerous advantages to fostering foreign relationships, there are significant limitations that must be highlighted when considering

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<sup>40</sup> J. Helfers, "Hearts and Minds in 2025: How Foreign and Domestic Culture Will Shape the Future Battlefield," *Beyond Shock and Awe: Warfare in the 21st Century* (2006): 186.

programs designed to support the creation and sustainment of foreign relationships. Firstly, the concept of establishing foreign relationships cannot be forced upon DoD personnel. Some personnel will never be convinced of the utility of maintaining foreign contacts despite the incentives of funded travel and better evaluations. Additionally, some personnel will not perceive the benefits foreign contacts deliver to the DoD's operational awareness and cultural intelligence. A key limitation that should also be addressed is that foreign relationships can take significant time to develop and might not provide tangible benefits until years later. Another limitation is that not all personnel are well-suited for having foreign relationships. Some personalities are xenophobic in nature or dislike networking as part of their duty description. Additionally, instituting a culture that fosters foreign relationships does not guarantee that personnel will establish significant contacts. Some personnel may never develop useful contacts while others might cultivate meaningful relationships of strategic importance to the DoD. Determining whether a contact is important or predicting if one will become significant at a future date is problematic. Also, pinpointing which personnel are best suited to establish and maintain foreign contacts is difficult to accurately predict. Therefore, money and time spent fostering foreign relationships may not always generate consistent results based on the human element involved in these associations. In some cases, certain foreign contacts may have a negative opinion of efforts by the DoD to foster foreign relationships. To some contacts, the programs might be interpreted as attempts to take advantage of foreign counterparts by gathering intelligence and influencing them to act in the best interests of the U.S. Measuring the value of foreign relationships can also be considered another limitation to the thesis. The notion that personal relationships can move mountains, as expressed in previous chapters, is difficult to quantify. However, historical examples such as those presented in Chapter III, validate the benefits of creating programs that help initiate and sustain foreign relationships.

### **C. MAXIMIZING RECOMMENDATIONS: A STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS**

In order to fully capitalize on foreign relationships, the DoD should aggressively implement the programs outlined in Chapter IV. Each recommended program is

mutually supportive of one another and should be enacted with equal enthusiasm. Without the Foreign Contact Database, the DoD has minimal situational awareness of foreign relationships and without Funded Foreign Relationship Maintenance, personnel are not as capable of sustaining foreign contacts and updating the FCD. Multinational missions and exercises, foreign education and cultural immersion, and reunions and conferences all assist DoD personnel in gaining and maintaining foreign contacts to add to the FCD and visit at a later date to further develop the relationship using FFRM. One program should not be championed at the expense of another. Each foreign relationship related program should be vigorously funded to ensure success. Strategically, the DoD should focus its efforts long term when measuring success and considering the effectiveness of programs that promote foreign relationships. The DoD needs to accept that millions of dollars will be spent promoting foreign relationships and positive results may take years to fully realize. Additionally, the institutional culture within the DoD must be shifted to one that supports the process of fostering foreign relationships. Ultimately, the price of fostering foreign relationships will prove worthwhile as the DoD gains additional influence through added operational awareness and cultural intelligence provided by foreign contacts. By wholeheartedly embracing programs that promote the establishment and maintenance of foreign relationships, the DoD will further U.S. security interests and foreign policy objectives.

#### **D. FINAL CONCLUSION**

While the United States is a premier global power, it retains a deficiency in operational awareness and cultural intelligence. The Department of Defense, however, remains in a unique position to leverage foreign relationships among personnel for the purposes of gaining influence, awareness, and furthering U.S. security and foreign policy objectives. Foreign relationships provide numerous advantages, but are presently underfunded and underappreciated within the DoD. A shift in the institutional culture of the DoD towards favoring the fostering of foreign relationships will allow an increased level of awareness and international influence to the United States government. While the aforementioned programs designed to foster foreign relationships will cost millions,

the money spent will be insignificant compared to the billions allocated for military hardware, which has no ability to leverage foreign contacts and provide cultural intelligence. Considering the historical vignettes presented earlier in the thesis, the costs associated with fostering foreign relationships have a relatively low financial and institutional investment and considerably high strategic payoff. From averting coups and rescuing U.S. hostages to preventing major conflicts between nuclear powers, fostering foreign relationships among DoD personnel remains a worthy endeavor. The DoD needs to start promoting the establishment of foreign associations earlier in the career's of its personnel to allow maximum exposure and facilitate further development of relationships. Finally, creating an atmosphere within the DoD that promotes an improved understanding and collaboration with foreign allies will be decisive in countering current shortcomings in operational awareness and cultural intelligence. As the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review advocated the continued development of the nation's "enduring alliances," the DoD must also focus on expanding alliances at the individual level through fostering foreign relationships.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> *Quadrennial Defense Review* (February 6, 2006): 6. "Achieving the vision set out in this report will only be possible by maintaining and adapting the United States' enduring alliances. Alliances are clearly one of the nation's greatest sources of strength."



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